

THE AMERICAN
NATIONAL PREACHER.

No. 12. Vol. 8.] NEW-YORK, MAY, 1834. [WHOLE No. 96.

SERMON CLXVII.

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CONSEQUENCES OF INTEMPERANCE IN EATING.

[Continued from page 360.]

PROVERBS xxiii. 2. *Put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite.*

THIS is Solomon's direction to one who is tempted to indulge in eating to excess. And it means, either that a man in such circumstances, should feel as if a knife were at his throat, to give him a mortal wound if he yielded to the temptation; or, that it would be better for him to put a knife to his throat, than to indulge his appetite immoderately. Understood either way, it forcibly represents the dangerous consequences of excess in diet. To exhibit these consequences, is my object in this discourse.

1. Let us consider the effects of this kind of excess on the physical character.

The peculiar influence of alcoholic mixtures, whether ardent spirit, or wine, it is not my design to depict: but merely the effects of those articles, whether fluid or solid, that are commonly taken for nourishment.

There are two articles of drink, viz. tea and coffee, so extensively used, and regarded as affording nourishment, that a few words seem necessary concerning them: though I intend not here a full discussion as to their use. But the true nature of their operation on the system ought to be understood. And there is no longer any intelligent physician, or chemist, who maintains, that, apart from the substances with which they are mixed when taken, there is derived from them the least nourishment. They operate precisely like alcohol, (except that they do not intoxicate,) by stimulating the nervous system; and thus rouse into action the strength of the constitution: but they impart to it no new strength. Hence it is, that those addicted to their use, are apt to resort to them with greater frequency, and to make the decoction stronger and stronger, just as is the case with those who habitually employ alcohol. Hence too it is, that the feeble and nervous are affected by their use with tremors, palpitations of the heart, and a frequent sense of sinking and debility, after their excitement is over. Hence too, the frequent headache of such persons, which, for a time, is relieved by a free use of the sub-

stances that produced it, in the same manner as the horrid prostration of the intemperate man is relieved by a resort to the stimulating bowl, which will once more rouse up his energies only to sink still lower. Hence too, the sleeplessness, at night, and the stupor and heaviness that oppress the system in the morning, until a repetition of the use arouses the organs to new efforts.

That these substances exert a salutary influence, occasionally as medicines, cannot be doubted. But it is no less certain, that their habitual use produces, in most constitutions, in a greater or less degree, the effects that have been mentioned. Hence a distinguished French physician says, that they should be used *only in those circumstances, when it is proper to use fermented or distilled liquors*. Yet how wide spread and enormous their use! During the year 1831, more than *three hundred million* pounds of coffee were consumed in Europe and America; and *fifty millions* in the United States: and as many pounds of tea among us, as we have inhabitants. Surely their effects cannot be small, either upon the health, or the pecuniary resources of the community. And if water be a decidedly better beverage, the inquiry certainly deserves the serious attention of every man, and especially of every Christian, whether both worldly and religious motives do not demand an abandonment of these luxuries.

But to dwell no longer on a point that will probably be so unwelcome to most of the community, I proceed to point out the physical effects of excess in the use of articles really nourishing, when used temperately.

This excess produces sometimes grossness of appearance and obesity, and sometimes a haggard aspect and an emaciation of the frame. Fleshi-ness and a gross countenance are commonly regarded as resulting from excess, either in eating or drinking; and in most cases this is a correct inference. But very few are aware, of what is probably true, that the most usual effect of over-eating is excessive leanness and a pale squalid aspect. The digestive organs, being overloaded, are unable to convert any part of the food they receive into healthy nourishment: the consequence is, that the body is famished, not through a deficiency, but by an excess of food. In other constitutions, the superabundance is converted into fat; which must be regarded, generally, as a secretion more or less of a morbid character.

That this is a true view of the subject, fair experiments will show. Let the too fleshy man reduce the quantity, and simplify the quality of his food, and employ a proper proportion of exercise, and he will soon be reduced to a healthy standard. And let the emaciated man who has no actual disease upon him, do the same; and when he takes only that quantity and quality of food which his digestive organs can master with pleasure, he will generally find his muscles attaining gradually the strength and fullness of health. This is, indeed, directly contrary to the course that is usually taken: but it is nevertheless the course which medical philosophy and experience point out. A man becomes emaciated and feeble, and the conclusion he and his friends naturally draw, is, that he needs only a greater quantity, or more nourishing quality of food, to restore him; whereas what he needs is to give rest to his digestive organs, that they may gain strength to convert food into nourishment. And this rest can be obtained only by reducing the daily task imposed upon them.

Another physical effect of excessive eating, is *muscular torpidity*.—This is exemplified in that indisposition to exertion, and tendency to sleep, which every man feels after a very hearty meal. The slightest effort seems an insupportable burthen: every thing, indeed, except sleep, is burdensome. The reason of this torpidity I have explained in a former discourse.—The muscles, the senses, and the brain, must in a greater or less degree,

suspend their proper work, in order that the energies of the system may be concentrated in the stomach. This is the reason that many are in the habit of deferring the principal meal of the day till their active efforts are over; for they have found, that after dinner it is no easy matter to bring the voluntary muscles into action; and multitudes suppose this sluggish state of the system is the necessary result of taking food, and have no idea that when only a temperate quantity of food is taken, the system is refreshed and invigorated, instead of being oppressed; and that it is *excess* only that is succeeded by torpidity. True, a man may be so much fatigued before dinner that nature will demand repose: or his drowsiness may result from a feeble state of health; but with these exceptions, the torpidity subsequent to meals, is to be imputed to criminal excess.

It often happens, that while the muscles are thus rendered inactive by their sympathy with the digestive powers, the nervous system is unduly excited. Hence the uneasiness that often follows a too hearty meal; and hence too, the extreme irritability and crabbedness of the glutton, when not buried in sleep, or "feeding himself without fear" at the table of luxury.

It is natural to infer, that if the digestive powers have a severer task imposed upon them than nature intended, they will only imperfectly execute their office. The consequence must be, a greater or less derangement of the system; since imperfect blood must produce imperfect nourishment. Thus the way is prepared for disease; or rather, this is sowing the seeds of disease, which, in such a soil, will soon spring up, and flourish in rank luxuriance. The common opinions as to the origin of diseases are exceedingly incorrect. When attacked by severe and violent disorders, it is rare that any one thinks of looking farther than to the slight exposure or fatigue that *developed* the complaint, but was by no means its cause. The fact is, the constitution in most cases is a long while preparing for sickness before it comes; and in a majority of instances, that preparation consists, either in unnecessary expenses of vital energy, or in intemperance in drink or food; and in such cases, certainly the cause is sinful, so that sometimes, a man who dies with a fever, or the apoplexy, may be as criminal as he who terminates his days by the pistol. All feel this to be true in the case of the drunkard. But why is it not equally true of him, who through excess in food, prepares his system to be invaded and overcome by disease?

When a man overloads his digestive powers, every part of the system sympathises with them, and lends a helping hand to sustain the burden.—All those organs that serve as waste gates to the bodily frame are immediately roused to most vigorous action, and endeavor to throw off the superabundance before it has corrupted the system. For a time the object is in a good measure accomplished. But wearied out ere long by incessant labor, they fail to accomplish their object, and soon disease is able to fix its talons in the constitution. The man brought suddenly upon a sick bed, racks his invention to assign some cause for his complaint, that will exonerate himself from blame; and he feels perfectly satisfied, if he can recollect having taken a cold, or having been necessitated to perform some extra labor. Whereas, had he been temperate, that extra labor would not probably have injured him, nor a slight atmospheric vicissitude have resulted in a catarrh or cold. His intemperance has exhausted the powers of life, and the vitiated blood can no longer be purified by their action: The intelligent physician often sees in the flushed countenance and fleshiness of one man, and in the paleness and emaciation of another, the marks of incipient disease. But the individual himself, borne up by the over excitement of stimulating food, fancies himself secure from disease until suddenly prostrated.

Lest I should seem to be exaggerating the effects of excess in eating in producing disease, I will fortify my statements by the opinion of several distinguished physicians.

"Gluttony and intemperance," says one, "are the source of two thirds of the diseases which embitter the life of man."

"The due degree of temperance," says another, "would add one third to the duration of human life."

"I tell you honestly," says a third, "what I think is the cause of the complicated maladies of the human race: it is their gormandizing, and stuffing and stimulating their digestive organs to an excess, thereby producing nervous disorders and irritation."

"It is the opinion of the majority of the most distinguished physicians," says a fourth, "that intemperance in diet, destroys the bulk of mankind: in other words, that what is eaten and drank, and thus taken into the habit, is the original cause of by far the greater number of diseases which afflict the human race."

"Most of all the chronic diseases, the infirmities of old age, and the short period of the lives of Englishmen," said another, more than a century since, "are owing to repletion."

Says another, "What occasions *two thirds* of all inflammatory and febrile diseases, but causes, in themselves not serious, operating upon a system highly susceptible of diseased action, from being overcharged with stimulating and nutritious matter? All our most eminent physicians agree in this one point, that as a people, we eat far too much hearty food; that is, we take in more rich nutriment than we require, and the consequence is, our system becomes overloaded and oppressed—our organs are clogged in the performance of their several functions—the circulating fluids become too thick and stimulating, and the proneness to derangement and diseased action, is greatly increased. Hence arises a large proportion of the inflammatory and febrile diseases amongst us, and hence it is, that copious blood letting and active medicines are so much more required in America than in most other countries."

Will not these appalling testimonies startle those Christians, who, by their excesses are taking the very course which is here marked out, as the road to premature disease and death? Will they still continue to regard the intemperate drinker as the only man who is violating the command, *Thou shalt not kill*? In view of such results from the daily violation of the rules of temperance in eating, can he go on as he has done, with his conscience asleep? Can he thus cut short his days, and not be guilty? For it ought further to be remembered, that excess in food, not merely pre-disposes to disease, but weakens the power of the system to resist disease. Hence the temperate man will rise unhurt from an attack which will crush the glutton at once. For the latter has tasked his bodily organs so severely, that they cannot sustain a conflict with disease. This is admitted universally in the case of the drunkard. But it is equally true in respect to that man who is intemperate in food. And if his constitution give way thirty or forty years earlier, in consequence of that intemperance, why is he less guilty than the drunkard, for the self-immolation?

II. I proceed next to consider the effects of intemperance in eating upon the mental character.

The bodily torpor, already described as the result of excess, cannot exist without imparting a corresponding stupidity to the mind. In other words, the load that paralyses the bodily powers must prostrate the intellect and cramp all its energies. Let a man attempt vigorously to exercise his mind after a hearty meal, and he will have a good idea of the effects of excess upon the intellect. He cannot confine the attention, nor depend

upon the memory, nor rouse the imagination, nor trust the judgment. What though he direct his eye to the pages of science, or even to the lighter pages of literature; a heavy fog impedes his vision, and a leaden weight hangs upon the intellectual wheels and springs. In short, his mental powers are too obtuse to discern, and too lethargic to act. The only alternative is to let them rest until the corporeal system is relieved of its task. This is in fact the course that is generally taken. And in this way an immense amount of time is lost, and that too without any compunctions of conscience; because men generally do not know that the indisposition to mental exertion which they feel is the result of excessive indulgence of the appetite. Multitudes of literary men at the present day, who suppose themselves as diligent in study and in bodily effort as is consistent with health, are in the habit of losing almost entirely their afternoons, and of giving them up to sleep, or lethargy, or idle sauntering about. After dinner they are really incapable of bodily or mental effort, because they have indulged themselves too freely at the table. Some in such circumstances resort to the stimulus of tea, or coffee, or even wine. But the forced mental operations that succeed are unnatural and inefficient: and in the end no time is gained, because the prostration subsequent to such excitement is great and long continued. Nothing, indeed, but universal temperance can give a uniform and unsophisticated energy to the mind. Every student knows something of the nature of this energy, if he has ever sat down to his books in the morning, after a refreshing night's sleep and a light breakfast. His system is then free from the irritation and oppression of dietetic excesses: and such a state essentially may be continued through the day by the practice of strict temperance; for it is as true of the universally temperate man as of the vegetable feeder—that “with him it is morning all the day long.”

I appeal then to the individual who thus almost habitually loses his afternoons, and inquire of him, what account he expects to render to God for so much time wasted by the unnecessary indulgence of the appetite? Especially do I inquire of the minister of Christ, upon whose time at the present day there is an almost constant demand, how he expects to meet with composure in judgment those whom he has so often warned against the waste of their precious time? *Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?*

III. In the third place, let us consider the effects of excess in eating, upon the moral and religious character.

Most men suppose that the slight pain, or uneasiness, or drowsiness, that succeeds a too hearty meal, is the whole of the effect which such excess produces. When a man finds himself, some hours or even days after the indulgence, excited in his temper on the slightest provocation, fretful and impatient of contradiction, and betrayed into severity or retaliation unworthy the character of a Christian or a man, little is he aware that a more careful attention to the kind and quantity of his food might have armed him against the temptations that overcame him, and enabled him to have kept his temper even under the grossest insults. But he has only to put in practice the rules of temperance, suggested in a preceding discourse, to be satisfied that *one principal cause of a fretful temper*, and a disposition easily to be excited and exasperated, and an impatience of contradiction, lies in his intemperate habits at the table. Indeed, he will become satisfied that the essence of his sin lies more in the cause, which is excess in eating, than in its almost unavoidable result, an irritable temper.

Many men are in the habit of living almost continually in a feverish state of feeling, disposed to murmur at almost every occurrence, and very rarely to be in a state calm enough for prayer, or any other religious du-

ty. Now in many instances this ruffled state of mind is kept up by the irritation of the nervous system occasioned by overloading the digestive powers. The temperate man alone can exhibit the temper of a philosopher and the calmness of the Christian. Just in proportion to a man's intemperance in any respect, will be the violence and irregularity of his passions. He may impute their ravages to peculiarity of constitution; but most probably, in nearly every case, *God imputes it to some criminal indulgence*. It is high time that Christians had learnt to practice universal temperance before they charge an irritable temper or ferocious passions upon nature.

Another frequent attendant upon excess in eating is *gloom and melancholy*. The individual finds his spirits sinking without any apparent cause, and gloomy forebodings preying upon his mind. Hope, that once buoyed him up with elastic wing, now sinks under the heavy load of melancholy, and almost ceases to breathe. A lowering cloud encircles the horizon and gradually spreads over the whole heavens. A settled despondency and listless inaction not unfrequently come on, interrupted only by occasional seasons of abstinence or temperance. Although the man feels as if he could readily part with every earthly possession if he could recover his former cheerfulness, yet he never once suspects that the reduction of a few ounces of food at each meal would effectually remove the incubus from his soul.

"The great majority of those complaints which are considered purely mental," says Dr. James Johnson, Physician extraordinary to the King of England, "such as irritability and irascibility of temper, gloomy melancholy, timidity and irresolution, despondency, &c. might be speedily remedied and entirely removed by a rigid system of abstinence, and a very little medicine."

Fatal as is this gloomy state of mind to success in worldly pursuits, its most lamentable influence is exerted upon the religious character. The individual had long perhaps thought himself created anew in Christ Jesus, and indulged the hope of being an heir to the eternal inheritance. But he loses all confidence and almost all hope of final acceptance: and his thoughts brood with terrible self-application upon all that is terrific to the unconverted sinner and the formal professor. In vain is he pointed to the divine promises, or exhorted to meditate upon the richness and freeness of grace as exhibited through a Savior. But let him for a few weeks give up his rich and stimulating diet, and partake only of the plainest fare, and that in the smallest quantity which will sustain life and health, and he will find the cloud gradually withdrawing, and the Sun of Righteousness rising again with healing in his wings. Even when his abstemiousness is carried so far as to weaken, in some measure, his bodily energies, he will find that his mind will gather strength and be filled again with the peace of God that passeth understanding.

Pomponius Atticus, the friend of Cicero, under the influence of that melancholy which so often accompanies a disordered state of the stomach, had resolved to destroy himself: but being persuaded to accomplish his purpose by starvation, taking only a little water from time to time to alleviate his anguish, the abstinence of a few days cured his melancholy, and he readily abandoned his purpose of suicide, and actually lived to an advanced age. By abstinence or temperance may religious melancholy also, in a great many instances, be cured. Indeed I have little doubt that a majority of the cases of feeble hope and desponding faith that exist at the present day, in those manifestly pious, are produced by excess in eating. The daily habit of taking into the system even a few ounces more of food than the organs can well manage, is sufficient to keep the spirits continually depressed; and to convert a once vigorous, active,

cheerful Christian, into a desponding, irresolute, inefficient slave. Could such men be persuaded to try the effect of uniform and strict temperance, they would find such a relief as would guard them effectually against future indulgence. But they are usually the very last persons to be persuaded that they are intemperate, or that such simple means will work so powerful a cure.

Excess operates injuriously upon the religious character in another way. It produces an *irregularity* in all the feelings and affections good and bad: now raising them to a high pitch of excitement, and then occasioning them to sink so low that no call can arouse them. Now how can a man judge correctly respecting his Christian character, while under the influence of such irregular emotions? He soon finds that his religious feelings are in a great measure dependent upon the state of his bodily health; and when they seem to be such as Christian experience requires, how can he tell whether they are the result of religious principle or of disordered nerves? And when nothing will excite them, may not the cause be an exhausted state of the system from excess in food?

O, what Christian, who knows any thing of the value of a bright and steady hope of heaven, and of uniform and consistent religious feelings, will consent to give up these blessings for the sake of unnecessary indulgence of morbid appetite! Can he be a Christian who will do it? He cannot certainly be an eminent Christian. Indeed, we may set it down as a universal fact, that no great eater can be a very consistent, or amiable, or happy man. He is under the dominion of one of the grossest of the animal appetites; and until he can learn to mortify this and deny himself unnecessary and forbidden gratification, he must be content to live destitute of the pure and holy joys which are the reward of temperance and devoted piety.

Individuals who suffer from religious melancholy usually expect and receive much sympathy from their Christian brethren and from Christian ministers, on the ground that it is their misfortune rather than their sin. But before we tender them our sympathies, we ought to inquire into their dietetic habits—we ought to dine with them once, and see whether the cause of their despondency does not lie in unreasonable indulgence. If so, strict temperance may cure them: and if they will not adopt this remedy, they ought rather to be reproved, and warned of their guilt and danger, than pitted for their calamity.

IV. In the fourth place let us glance at the effects of excess in eating upon the domestic character.

Religion, predominating in the family circle, is generally and justly regarded as rendering that the happiest spot on earth. But just in proportion as intemperance of any kind prevails there, will that happiness be neutralized. Children, fed upon rich and stimulating food, will become sickly and peevish; and instead of exhibiting those innocent and playful feelings that render them such interesting objects in a family scene, they will convert it into a Bedlam. Parents and domestics will have enough to do to manage their unruly tempers and to nurse their sickly constitutions. Especially will this be the case, if those parents have indulged themselves as well as their children in luxurious living: for then their own tempers will be irritable, their feelings irregular, and their patience easily exhausted. To-day, they will break forth upon their disobedient offspring with violent and needless severity. To-morrow, through mere irresolution, they will suffer their authority to be trampled upon. That same irresolution and the despondency that often accompanies it, will render them unfaithful in giving religious instruction to their children, and dispose them to be so reserved and cold in their intercourse with their little ones, as will send a chill and alienation through their hearts.

The same cause will prevent between husbands and wives that cheerful and constant attention to one another's wants, and that sociable disposition so essential to mutual happiness; and a cold, unlovely manner will most probably be substituted, which will prove a poison to domestic enjoyment. No family circle can be truly happy where cheerfulness and a mutual disposition to please and be pleased do not exist. But there is not a greater enemy to such a state of feeling than excess in food. So that he who daily loads the table of his family with every dainty for the palate—even when real love to his family is the motive—may be sure that he is throwing an apple of discord and petulance into fallen man's only remaining paradise. Would he preserve the happiness of that Paradise, let him by precept and example, strive to make it the abode of universal temperance.

V. In the fifth place, let us consider the effects of excess in eating, upon the *social character*.

We have only to suppose a community generally devoted to the indulgence of the palate, and then inquire, how the physical, intellectual and moral effects of the excesses that have been pointed out in the case of an individual, affect the social condition. The individuals of such a community will be subject to the physical and mental torpor and imbecility which are the inevitable concomitants of over-eating. Such then will be the predominant character of the community. Feeble health and the want of power to sustain hardship and fatigue, will result in an effeminacy which always marks a sinking state of society. Few, if any, bright examples of active and powerful intellect will be seen, where intellect is cramped by an overloaded corporeal system. Wherever excitement exists it will be violent and irregular; because the sensibilities of every luxurious man are rendered morbid; and because, too, his passions and feelings are subject to sudden and great alternations. Are the individuals in society feverish and fretful in their tempers? How can frequent and painful collisions and alienations be avoided, when they come in contact? Are they melancholy and jealous, as great eaters frequently are? Then will deep-rooted enmity and hatred spring up in their bosoms against their neighbors, and society will be convulsed by their discord.

Late hours are an almost inevitable attendant upon dietetic excesses.—A too hearty dinner produces an almost unconquerable tendency to sleep; and an afternoon nap is followed by wakefulness during the first part of the night. This is usually increased by the stimulus of tea, coffee, wine, or spirits. These, by creating an artificial appetite, are almost sure to be an occasion of hearty and late suppers. The final consequence will be, that the individual who takes such a course of living will sleep in the morning rather than at night. Of course, breakfast will be late, and therefore dinner must be so too. In this way is the whole system of late hours introduced, particularly among the wealthy, who suffer most from luxurious living. And it having become fashionable to be late, the contagion will be more or less communicated to other classes, until the whole community is infected. Now I hesitate not to say, that, almost without an exception, the man whose habits are such as above described, cannot be a very industrious man; for he loses in sleep the hours of the morning; one of which is more valuable, for physical or intellectual labor, than two at any other time of the day. Most injurious, therefore, upon the industry of society, will be the effect of excess in eating. And if individuals are found, who are really industrious, notwithstanding their hearty dinners and late hours, yet they do a violence to their constitutions which will be followed by premature prostration and decay.

While the industrious habits of society are thus more or less para-

lyzed, the same cause excites to extravagant expenditures. As the appetite becomes more fastidious and epicurean, the richness and variety of entertainments must be increased. Envy, pride, and unholly emulation, lend their influence in stimulating families to attempt excelling one another in the richness and variety of their entertainments. Nor is it in food and drink only that there is a strife for the mastery. For excess in diet infallibly leads to extravagance in dress, furniture, and equipage. Even the poor emulate the rich in these costly exhibitions, if admitted to their society; or if not, excessive extravagance among the wealthy, stimulates other classes to like extravagance, so far as is in their power. And thus it happens, that multitudes, who live far beyond their income, fancy themselves very economical and temperate, because their table is less luxuriously loaded, and their equipage less splendid than that of some rich neighbor; when in fact, their extravagance may be far greater, and more criminal than their neighbor's, because he is guilty of spending only the surplus of his income, while they are reducing themselves to poverty.

In no country in the world is it so easy for all classes of society to obtain the means of living independently and comfortably as in this.— Yet what complaining of the hardness of the times, and the stagnation of business do we hear on every side; and what a large proportion of our citizens are so encumbered by debt as to be perpetually tormented while alive, and to leave their property insolvent! Whence is this but from the excesses and extravagancies that have been mentioned? They spend vastly more for food and drink, and for equalling their neighbors in dress and equipage, than necessity or happiness demands. And yet, intelligent as our citizens are; nay, Christians, as many of them are, they scarcely suspect that they exceed at all the bounds of temperance or of economy, and really suppose that their pecuniary embarrassments result from no fault of theirs. But the truth is, the chief source of bankruptcy among the rich, and of straitened circumstances among the poorer classes of the community, lies in some species of intemperance or extravagance in living. And it always will be so, until men shall learn, better than they now understand, in what intemperance and extravagance consist.

A necessary result of luxurious living, is a contemptible effeminacy of character in one sex, and a pitiable nervous frailty in the other. Hence, communities given for a long time to excess and extravagance, swarm with so many young men, who exhibit all the softness of the female character, without any of its virtues; whose days are devoted to trifling decorations and accomplishments; whose sensibilities are exhausted upon trifles, and whose physical and intellectual features are personified imbecility. Hence too, in the same communities, are found so many females, who, in the language of scripture, "*would not adventure to set the sole of their foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness.*" Their physical constitutions are deeply impressed with the marks of frailty, imperfect development, and disproportionate culture: and how can their minds but resemble the fragile and weak tenement in which they are imprisoned? A sensibility, painfully acute, is their most striking characteristic; unfitting them for the trying duties that devolve upon wives and mothers; and indeed, they are little better calculated for usefulness than the porcelain ornaments of the rich man's parlor.

Now, with such effeminacy in the fathers, and ridiculous weakness in the mothers, what will be the character of their progeny? In a few generations how deteriorated and contemptible! Indeed, it requires but two or three generations absolutely to run out a family that gives itself up to luxurious indulgence. Born destitute of stamina, in the physical con-

stitution, and alike puny in intellect, and pampered in the cradle of luxury, the descendants have not the power to retain even the pecuniary consequence, much less the character of their progenitors; and often the very name ceases among men. Some temperate and industrious individual, from an obscure condition, gradually comes into possession of their wealth, and in turn his descendants give up the reins to self-indulgence, and take the same downward course, and are soon buried in the same oblivious gulf.

"Oh Luxury! the eldest born of wealth,
Thou foe to virtue, and thou bane of health;
Insidious nursling in the lap of ease,
Whose breath is pestilence, whose smile disease,
May suffering man yet see thee as thou art,
A greedy vampire, feasting on his heart!"

VI. In the sixth place, let us consider the effects of epicurean indulgence upon the national character.

Physical energy—so greatly is mind dependant upon matter—lies at the foundation of a nation's success and glory. But epicurean excesses impair, and finally crush it. How little of clear-sighted, effective legislation, and of promptness and decision in time of peril, and of even-handed justice following close upon the heels of crime, can we expect, when rulers and magistrates are frequently found at the table of luxury oppressing and benumbing all their intellectual and moral energies! Nor can a nation expect that her sailors and soldiers will escape the withering influence, when the example of indulgence is set by legislators, judges, and the respectable portion of the citizens. More than one Hannibal, who had conquered the snows of the Alps, and the sword of his enemy, has been subdued by the luxuries of Capua.

Nor let a nation imagine that a resolute and pervading spirit of enterprise can long coexist with luxurious indulgence. The men who line their country's coasts with forests of masts, who build up at frequent intervals the busy and the mighty city, and who, in their commercial enterprises, traverse every ocean and clime, now braving the billows and the ice-bergs of arctic and antarctic seas, and now the heats and pestilence of the torrid zone, are never trained for their work at the table of luxury. And just in proportion as dietetic excesses prevail, will such hardy enterprises diminish. So in every other art and pursuit demanding vigor and noble daring, the arm of industry will be palsied, and those arts only flourish that minister to effeminacy and luxury.

Well were it for a nation if the deteriorating process stopped here. But that apple of a nation's eye, its morality, soon feels its inroads; and its quick-sighted consciousness of pollution becomes dimmed. The obtuseness which excess produces in the individual brain, is communicated by an infallible sympathy to the national conscience and heart. The abandoned and the profligate fear not to outrage more and more the moral sense of the community, because they see that the eagle eye and inflexible lion heart of virtue have departed. And yet, so gradual and smooth is this downward progress, that rarely is warning given or taken, till the giddy whirlpool is too far entered to return.

But this brightest jewel in a nation's crown cannot thus be plucked out without other glories falling into the plunderer's hand. Republican simplicity of manners, and republican equality of condition, are soon forced to flee from so uncongenial a soil; while customs and habits most unnatural and disgusting to the pure taste of temperance, come in like a flood; sweeping away every resting place of freedom, and raising up a

haughty aristocracy to lord it over a prostrate multitude, made too imbecile, physically, intellectually, and morally, by aping the luxury and extravagance of their oppressors, to be able to resist them.

It is indeed true, that intemperance in diet is never the sole cause of this dreadful prostration of a nation's glories. Other marauders are always in company with this, to make sure the destruction and to share the spoil. But this is one of the leaders and pioneers in the accursed work; and if successfully resisted, none of the ruthless banditti that follow in the train, will be able to maintain their ground.

VII. Finally, let us consider the effects of dietetic excesses upon the cause of benevolence.

In such an artificial state of society as exists in most civilized nations, when luxury and extravagance have imparted to the animal appetites a most unnatural and ravenous strength, very few persons, not even professed Christians, are aware how few and simple are the real wants of nature. They have no idea with how cheap a fare she can, not only be satisfied, but made abundantly happy. Hence many good men have come to regard even a very criminal excess and extravagance in living as necessary to the health, strength, and well-being of the human system. Hence too, they can form no just estimate of the great amount of pecuniary saving which the really temperate man is able to make. To state that most families might easily in this way reduce the expenses of living by a third, or half, would seem most unreasonably extravagant; yet I doubt not but even this is a calculation that will be found far below the actual experiment in millennial times. For it is not merely the saving in the article of food that is to be taken into the account. Good as well as bad habits always cluster together: and when men become really temperate, they are led naturally and easily to cast off their needless extravagancies of dress, furniture and equipage. Thus will a man ere long extricate himself from many vortexes of expenditure quite as large, deep and rapid, as that which revolves and roars around the table of luxury. Nor is this all. For, strict temperance in diet will give the physical ability and the mental inclination for a more untiring, active and efficient industry, whereby the pecuniary means will be greatly enlarged. A man who will faithfully adopt such retrenchments, and practice such industry, will be astonished and delighted to find how God will bless him in his basket and his store; and how wonderfully he can swell his contributions to the cause of benevolence. His hundreds now will cost him less of effort and sacrifice—I had almost said than his stinted tens before. Oh that Christians would learn to taste the joy of acting upon this millennial standard!

Pecuniary contribution, however, is not the greatest and most important offering which we are required to make to the cause of benevolence. There is the consecration of one's self, body, soul, and spirit, a *living sacrifice*, acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. We are to hold ourselves ready to go wherever he shall call us, and to do and suffer whatever he shall lay upon us, for promoting the temporal and eternal happiness of our fellow men. But how can he whose pampered appetite loathes the simple fare of temperance, and who is wedded in his attachment to rich and stimulating food, how can he accompany the devoted Moravian amid the eternal snows of the frigid zone, or be content to follow the Arab over the burning sands of the desert? No, these are services which he will leave for the disciples of temperance to perform; and persuade himself that his constitution is too delicate, and his prospect of usefulness too bright in civilized society, to permit him to leave the land of his father's: whereas, it may be, that his luxurious habits alone have crippled his physical energies, and rendered stagnant

the current of benevolence that should flow, warm and rapid, through every Christian's bosom; and therefore, God will not accept his apology for holding back from the missionary work.

Christian brother, or sister, whose eye may fall on these pages, are you to be reckoned in respect to your dietetic habits, among the temperate or the intemperate? Are you daily giving up the reins to appetite, so as to bring oppression upon your bodily powers, stupor upon your intellect, and apathy upon your heart? Are you thus, for the sake of pampering and gratifying mere animal nature, planting in your body the seeds of disease, and shortening your earthly career, too short at best? Are you thus polluting and destroying that body which is consecrated by your profession to be a temple of the Holy Ghost? And especially, can you thus treat the immortal spirit that animates this body: cramping and clouding the range of its exercises—rendering your disposition irritable and unlovely—fostering gloomy and corroding passions, and spreading doubt and despondency over your prospects for eternity? Oh, this is a dreadful tax for a Christian to pay to a tyrant so vile as intemperance!

Christian parents! are you bringing up your families on the principles of the strictest temperance, or are you suffering your children to make a god of their belly, and by rich and stimulating food to render their bodies sickly, their minds feeble, and their tempers crabbed? Oh, save them from the grasp of the remorseless tyrant, dyspepsy, and the community from the curse of a puny and useless progeny, and yourselves from bitter disappointment and anguish!

Christian citizen and fellow countryman, what is the testimony in respect to temperance in living which your table presents? Does the simplicity of patriarchal times and of our pilgrim fathers adorn it, or does modern extravagance load it down? Nobly take your stand, I beseech you, against the flood of luxury and excess that is rapidly spreading over us and paralysing the energies of our social and national character, consuming, worse than uselessly, our wealth, sowing in the community the poisonous seeds of envy and jealousy—prostrating the spirit of enterprise—lowering rapidly the standard of morality—and fostering that effeminacy and weakness of character, which invite the restless and ambitious to assail and destroy our liberties.

Christian philanthropist! lover of mankind! do you prefer the luxuries of the table to the luxury of doing good? Shall sordid appetite or slavery to general custom, be permitted to dry up the sources and stint the means of beneficence? Oh, at this day, when the cry for help, from so many lands waxes louder and louder, almost with a deafening emphasis, and when so many new fields for benevolent enterprise are showing their drought and desolation, every remaining clasp of selfishness should be unlocked from the Christian's heart; and through every avenue which industry, economy and self-denial can make, should the warm current of benevolence gush forth, full, and clear, and strong, for the conversion of the world.

(The subject to be continued.)

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